

Islamic Jihad and the Holocaust: From Hitler to Hamas

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Abstract: This article examines Haj Amin al-Husseini's involvement in the Holocaust, his ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Brotherhood's post-Holocaust influence on the spread of exterminationist Jew hatred. The article examines the connection between the Nazis and the Muslim Brotherhood facilitated by al-Husseini, showing the pivotal nature of the Arab Revolt of 1936 – 1939 in these relationships. By then the Brotherhood was sending delegations to the Nuremberg rallies and distributing the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and Arabic-language selections from Mein Kampf. The article then explores al-Husseini's direct collaboration with the Nazis and participation in the Holocaust. This begins with his instigation of a Nazi-backed coup in Iraq in April 1941, which was followed by the slaughter of hundreds of Jews in Baghdad. From there we go to al-Husseini's first meeting with Hitler in November 1941 and his work with Himmler in organizing Muslim SS killing units in the Balkans. This section ends with al-Husseini's hero's welcome as a Nazi war criminal in July 1946, when he was once again embraced by the Muslim Brotherhood. Finally, the article moves to the post-war years, with al-Husseini's recruitment and indoctrination of Yasser Arafat in the Brotherhood. This article considers the Brotherhood's influence on the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Hamas in the spread of an exterminationist agenda inspired by the Nazis.

Keywords: Holocaust, Islamic Jihad, Haj Amin al-Husseini, Palestine Liberation Organization, Hamas

Some Definitive Elements of Nazi Thinking

We begin by asking: What is the essence of National Socialist anti-Semitism? What is the Nazi anti-Semite anti-? What are the Nazis trying to eliminate from the world in the extermination of the Jews? Anti-Semitism was a fundamental, definitive aspect of the Nazis' worldview: they were not anti-Semites because they were racists, but rather they

were racists because they were anti-Semites. In this instance, however, “race” is not a biological or anthropological category – it is a *metaphysical* category known as *Rassenseele* or “race-soul.” Explaining the concept of *Rassenseele*, Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg writes, “*Blood and character, race and soul are merely different designations for the same entity.*”¹ According to Rosenberg, the Aryan *Geist* or “spirit” has been “poisoned” not just by Jewish blood but above all “by Judaism,” for the –ism is in the blood.² Therefore, every Jew is a carrier of the contagion of Judaism, so the extermination of the Jews must be total. In 1922 Hitler told German journalist Josef Hell, “Once I am in power, my first and foremost task will be the annihilation of the Jews.”³ He also declared to Hermann Rausching that, as Führer, his mission in life was to destroy the “tyrannical God of the Jews” and his “life-denying Ten Commandments.”⁴ The Nazis’ war against the Jews is a holy war waged against the satanic God of the satanic Jews, steeped in apocalyptic overtones. If “the Jew is victorious over the other peoples of the world,” Hitler asserted, “his crown will be the funeral wreath of humanity.”⁵ The object of extermination, then, was not only the Jews but also the teaching and testimony of Judaism that the Jews represent through their very presence in the world.

The Nazi Assault on the God of Abraham

Central to the Jewish tradition that the Nazis set out to eradicate is a certain understanding of the human being; indeed, the assault on the notion of the human being – on the sanctity of the other human being – always entails an assault on God. At the heart of Judaism is the view that the human being is essentially and inherently holy. Therefore a human being is not reducible to the ontological accidents of race, gender, culture, or ethnicity; nor is the human being justified by reason, resolve, or power. Created in the image and likeness of the Holy One, the human being harbors the presence of what sanctifies all of being from beyond being, as defined by the absolute, divine commandment to love the *other* human being, neighbor and stranger alike. According to Judaism, *every* human being is my fellow human being, indeed, is part of my family, descended as we are from a single human being. Why does God begin His creation of humanity with just one human being, and not two? So that no one

¹ Quoted in Weinreich, *Hitler’s Professors*, 26; italics in the original.

² Rosenberg, *Race and Race History*, 131–32.

³ Quoted in Atkins, *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement*, 29.

⁴ Quoted in Prager and Telushkin, *Why the Jews?*, 16.

⁵ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 65.

may say to another, “My side of the family is better than your side of the family” (see *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 8:4). Thus all of humanity is interrelated, physically through Adam and metaphysically through the Creator. The Nazis, by contrast, insist that there is no connection between the Aryan and the non-Aryan. From the Nazi standpoint, the value of a human being derives first from an accident of nature: a person who is born an Aryan has greater value than the rest of humanity by virtue of that natural accident. Second, an Aryan may assume even greater depth and substance through an inner will to power to overcome the “life-denying” commandments that come into the world through the Jews.

The aim of the Nazis’ exterminationist anti-Semitism? To obliterate the Holy One through the extermination of the Jews and to exterminate the Jews in the obliteration of the Holy One. “Only when you are My witnesses,” it is written, “am I God, but when you are not My witnesses, I – if one dare speak thus – am not God” (*Sifre* on Deuteronomy 33:5). Killing God – the Hitlerian usurpation of God – requires the extermination of the Chosen of God. Because the God of Abraham is omnipresent, the assault on his witnesses has to be omnipresent. Nothing else can explain why in November 1942 the Nazis trekked to Tromsø, Norway, 217 miles north of the Arctic Circle, to take away the seventeen Jews residing there; one does not venture into the Arctic out of economic envy, xenophobia, racial animosity, ethnic prejudice, or the longing to find a scapegoat.

In the words of Zelig Kalmanovitch, written from the depths of the Vilna Ghetto, “a war is being waged against the Jews. But this war is not merely directed against one link in the triad [of Israel, God, and Torah] but against the entire triad: against the Torah and God, against the moral law and Creator of the universe.”⁶ Another Vilna Ghetto diarist, Herman Kruk, confirms that the Nazis were perfectly aware of this metaphysical dimension of their assault on the Jews. In his diary, he often refers to the Gestapo’s “Jew Specialists,” such as the infamous Dr. Johannes Pohl, director of the Gestapo section known as *Judenforschung ohne Juden*, that is, “Research on Jews without Jews.”⁷ It was their responsibility to familiarize themselves with the texts and teachings of Judaism and to use that information to destroy the Jewish people, who embody the centuries-old Jewish testimony. Under the Nazi occupation, the Polish and German press referred to the war as the “Jew War” or the “War against the Jews,” demonstrating that the Nazis understood themselves to be waging a war

⁶ Kalmanovitch, “A Diary of the Nazi Ghetto in Vilna,” 52.

⁷ Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, 311.

against the singled-out witnesses of the covenant of Torah and thereby against God Himself.

The Nazis' assault on God assumed various forms, such as an assault on the Eternal One's entry into time through the holy days: they planned their actions against the Jews according to the Hebrew holy calendar. On the ninth of Av 1942, the anniversary of the destruction of both temples, the first mass transports to Treblinka pulled out of Warsaw. The final liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto was set for 19 April 1943, the eve of Passover. And the massive selections in the camps were held on Jewish holy days: during Rosh Hashanah in Auschwitz it was not God but chief physician Dr. Josef Mengele who decided who would live and who would die. And he said so.

In addition to the assault on the holy days, the Nazis systematically murdered the holiest ones among the Jewish people: the children. Yes, *the children*: they were the designated first targets in the Nazi war against God. The Talmud teaches that all of creation endures thanks to the breath of little children (*Shabbat* 119b). If the child sustains creation, the murder of the child is central to the war against the Creator. Further, according to tradition, only the prayers of our children reach the ears of God, "for the outcry of children," says Jacob ben Wolf Kranz, the Maggid of Dubno, "is formed by the breath of mouths unblemished by sin."⁸ With the extermination of the children, it is as though God had been rendered deaf. And once rendered deaf, he is rendered irrelevant; in the assault on the children, the Nazis approach their deicidal aim.

Just as the Shekhinah or the Divine Presence is associated with the community of Israel, so is she associated with prayers of Israel. Therefore the annihilation of the Divine Presence required the annihilation of prayer. Warsaw Ghetto diarist Chaim Kaplan bears witness to this assault. On the eve of Tisha B'Av 5700 (1940) he writes, "Public prayer in these dangerous times is a forbidden act....If you will, it is even sabotage, and anyone engaging in sabotage is subject to execution."⁹ Note well: the Nazis deemed prayer *an act of sabotage*. Why? Because prayer affirms the divine, transcendent authority behind the commandments of Torah, beginning with the prohibition against murder. And wherever we encounter exterminationist anti-Semitism, we encounter the systematic elimination of the divine prohibition against murder.

Because the Nazis undertook an assault on the soul created in the image and likeness of the Holy One, they undertook an assault on the human relation

⁸ Quoted in Kitov, *The Book of Our Heritage*, trans. Nathan Bluman (New York: Feldheim Publishers 1973), Vol. 1, 75–76.

⁹ Kaplan, *The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan*, ed. and trans by Abraham I. Katsh (New York: Collier, 1973), 179.

within which the soul draws its breath. The head of a block in Buchenwald, in one of the most chilling lines in all of Holocaust literature, informed the young Eliezer in Wiesel's *Night* that in the camp "there is no such thing as father, brother, friend. Each of us lives and dies alone."¹⁰ Primo Levi describes the anti-world by saying, "The struggle to survive is without respite, because everyone is desperately and ferociously alone."¹¹ Yes: *ferociously* alone! And no one was more ferociously alone than the Muselmann, the undead skeletal denizen of Auschwitz. Levi describes the Muselmänner as "the backbone of the camp, an anonymous mass, continually renewed and always identical, of non-men who march and labour in silence, the divine spark dead within them, already too empty to really suffer. One hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death."¹² If Auschwitz epitomizes the assault on God, the Muselmann embodies the essence of that assault. Far more than the victim of starvation and brutality, the Muselmann is *the Jew* whose very existence was deemed criminal, whose prayers were regarded as an act of sedition, whose holy days were turned over to desecration. He is *the Jew* for whom marriage and childbirth were forbidden, for whom schooling was a crime, for whom there was neither punishment nor protection under the law. He is *the Jew* widowed and orphaned, destitute and homeless, rendered ferociously alone and utterly nameless: the endless stream of the Muselmänner formed an *anonymous* mass.

As the Führer hid in his bunker and prepared for his suicide, he penned his last political will and testament. He ended his last written words with a plea to the world to continue to "resist mercilessly the poisoner of all nations, international Jewry,"¹³ a plea most thoroughly and systematically heeded by the Islamic jihadists and one of their primary movements, the Islamic Resistance Movement known as Hamas. Before proceeding to Hamas, however, a few words must be said about the Muslim Brotherhood and Haj Amin al-Husseini, the key to the ties that bind Hitler to Hamas.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Haj Amin al-Husseini: The Nexus of Nazis and Jihadists

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in March 1928, when Hasan al-Banna and five other brothers gathered to draft their creed: "Allah is our goal.

¹⁰ Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Marion Wiesel (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 110.

¹¹ Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 88.

¹² Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 90.

¹³ Quoted in Welch, *Hitler*, 97.

The Prophet is our leader. The Qur'an is our law. Jihad is our way. Death in the service of Allah is our highest desire." With this affirmation of the essence of the Brotherhood, al-Banna turned to Hitler and found deep inspiration.¹⁴ Hitler confirmed for him that Zionism is about establishing a base of operations for world domination: "While the Zionists try to make the rest of the world believe that the national consciousness of the Jew finds its satisfaction in the creation of a Palestinian state, the Jews again slyly dupe the dumb *Goyim*....All they want is a central organization for their international world swindle."¹⁵ Al-Banna also said that he learned from Hitler the power of propaganda against the Jews,¹⁶ as a means not of persuasion but of inciting hatred.¹⁷

By 1935 the Brotherhood had established a sophisticated program of propaganda modeled after the Nazis. From that point onward they regularly sent delegates to the Nazis' rallies in Nuremberg. In 1938 they led demonstrations against Egyptian Jews and held the Parliamentary Conference for Arab and Muslim Countries in Cairo, where they distributed Arabic translations of *Mein Kampf* and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. In 1939 they bombed a Cairo synagogue and Jewish homes. With the outbreak of the war, the Nazis enjoyed their full support. In 1941 Anwar Sadat joined the Brotherhood's military organization, and in 1943 he was arrested as a Nazi spy. When King Farouk granted asylum to Nazi war criminal Haj Amin al-Husseini on 20 June 1946, al-Banna and the Brotherhood hailed the *Grossmufti* as a hero and a great jihadist. Al-Husseini also had meetings with Sayyid Qutb, the man who would become the Brotherhood's most influential jihadist ideologue. In al-Husseini, then, we have an important link in the ties that bind the Nazis to the jihadists.

Al-Husseini came to power through a British act of appeasement after he had been tried in absentia and found guilty of inciting riots in Palestine in 1920; attempting to calm the Arab population, British mandate governor Herbert Samuel appointed him Mufti of Jerusalem on 8 May 1921. Among the Mufti's first actions was a declaration of jihad against the British and the Jews.¹⁸ On 31 March 1933, he paid his first official visit to the new Nazi German General Consul Heinrich Wolff in Jerusalem. He was soon on very friendly terms with the Nazis, who provided financial support for him to wage the Arab

¹⁴ Al-Banna, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna* trans. Charles Wendell (Berkley, University of California Press, 1978), 97.

¹⁵ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 325.

¹⁶ Al-Banna, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, trans. Charles Wendell (Berkley, University of California Press, 1978), 45–46.

¹⁷ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 632.

¹⁸ Dalin and Rothman, *Icon of Evil*, 131

Revolt of 1936–1939. In order to head off any notion that the anti-Semitism that was foundational for National Socialism might include Arabs, the German Foreign Ministry declared in 1936 that “the Nuremberg race laws are aimed only at the Jews,”¹⁹ and not at the Arabs. On 2 October 1937 al-Husseini met with Adolf Eichmann’s deputy Herbert Hagen in order to discuss additional ways in which the Mufti might serve Nazi aims against the Jews in the Middle East. On 13 October, once again wanted by the British for inciting riots, al-Husseini fled Palestine.

Two years later, now on the Nazis’ payroll, al-Husseini set up a base of operations in Baghdad, where on 3 April 1941 he led a coup against the British-backed government of Iraq. By the end of May, however, the British had suppressed the coup. Al-Husseini fled to Tehran, but not before he managed to incite the slaughter of 600 Jews in Baghdad on 1 June 1941 in an action known as the Farhud.²⁰ From Tehran the Mufti made his way to Rome, and from Rome he went to Berlin, where he had his first meeting with the Führer on 28 November 1941. Later he would write in his memoirs, “Our fundamental condition for cooperating with Germany was a free hand to eradicate every last Jew from Palestine and the Arab world. I asked Hitler for an explicit undertaking to allow us to solve the Jewish problem in a manner befitting our national and racial aspirations and according to the scientific methods innovated by Germany in the handling of its Jews. The answer I got was: ‘The Jews are yours.’”²¹ Once again we discover a bond between National Socialism to Islamic Jihadism, from Hitler to Hamas, both as influence and as affinity: it is exterminationist anti-Semitism.

Soon after his conference with Hitler al-Husseini met with Eichmann, whereupon he “was informed of the plan concerning the ‘Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe,’”²² a plan that suited very well not only al-Husseini’s desire for the annihilation of the Jews but also his aim as Mufti to bring salvation to all the believers of Islam, since he had always preached that murdering Jews pleases Allah and is essential to salvation. If it pleases Allah, then for Hamas and other jihadist murderers, killing Jews is about serving God, and not about “freeing Palestine” or driving out an “oppressor.” Just as a Nazi cannot be a Nazi without murdering Jews, so an Islamic Jihadist cannot be a Muslim without murdering Jews.

¹⁹ Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 19.

²⁰ Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, 158.

²¹ Quoted in Isseroff and Fitzgerald-Morris, “The Iraq Coup Attempt of 1941.”

²² Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem*, 165; my translation.

As early as January 1941 the *Grossmufti* had gone to Bosnia to convince Muslim leaders that a Muslim SS division would bring honor and glory to the followers of Islam. David Dalin and John Rothman estimate that al-Husseini recruited as many as 100,000 Muslims for the SS killing units.²³ Each battalion had its Imam and each regiment its Mullah. The Mufti set up a school in Dresden for the Mullahs and indoctrinated them in the essential ties between the Nazis and the jihadists. He recruited Bosnian Muslims to serve in the Waffen SS, assuring them that “there are considerable similarities between Islamic principles and those of National Socialism.”²⁴ The largest of the Mufti’s Bosnian Muslim killing units was the 13th Handschar Division of 21,065 men; recruitment for the Division began in February 1943. In a speech to the SS delivered on 11 January 1944 “Himmler argued that the bond between Nazism and Islam was built on enduring common values as well as shared enemies in the war. He also presented Hitler as a gift sent from God – and Allah.”²⁵ The commander of the Handschar Division, Karl-Gustav Sauberzweig, “reported that the Muslim recruits gladly adopted Nazi doctrine and even that ‘the Muslims, SS men in the Division, and the civilians are beginning to see in our Führer the mission of a second prophet,’ that is, one following Mohammed.” The Division went into action in February 1944.²⁶ Another major Muslim SS killing unit was the Skanderberg Division from Albania, with the *Arabisches Freiheitskorps* operating in Macedonia. The Muslim murderers would play a major role in rendering the Balkans *Judenrein* in the winter of 1943–1944.

Soon after he turned up in Egypt on 20 June 1946, now a wanted Nazi war criminal, the Mufti took in Yasser Arafat, the grandson of al-Husseini’s first cousin; he brought in a former Nazi commando officer to teach Arafat “the fine points of guerilla warfare.”²⁷ To be sure, Chuck Morse presents a convincing argument that “al-Husseini was himself most likely the true founder of the al-Fatah, … Arafat’s terror cell, … the nucleus of the PLO.”²⁸ And so we see how the intricate web linking the Nazis to the Muslim Brotherhood and to the Palestinian Liberation Organization finds its nexus in Haj Amin al-Husseini.

²³ Dalin and Rothman, *Icon of Evil*, 55.

²⁴ Quoted in Chuck Morse, *The Nazi Connection to Islamic Terrorism*, 77.

²⁵ Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 200.

²⁶ Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 201.

²⁷ Bossie, “Yasser Arafat: Nazi Trained.”

²⁸ Morse, *The Nazi Connection to Islamic Terrorism*, 90.

The PLO: Bred and Born of the Brotherhood

In October 1959, following the counsel of al-Husseini, Yasser Arafat, Salah Khalaf, Khalil al-Wazir, Farouq Qaddoumi, and Khaled al-Hassan founded the jihadist organization Fatah, a word that means “conquest” and is a reverse acronym for *Harakat al-Tahirir al-Watani al-Filastini*, “The Palestinian National Liberation Movement.”²⁹ Two years later Arafat made his first contact with Mahmoud Abbas, the current head of the PLO. On 29 May 1964, the Palestinian National Council drafted the Palestinian National Covenant to become the Palestinian Liberation Organization.³⁰ On 2 February 1969 Arafat became the PLO’s Chairman. With the stated aim of destroying the Jew “in order to take his place,”³¹ the PLO’s jihadist ideology, like Nazi ideology, allows no room for negotiation; also like the Nazis, they were willing to give the appearance of negotiating in order to achieve the higher aim of annihilation, adopting what they called a “phased strategy.”³² The Palestinian Authority continues to employ this strategy.

In July 1968 the PLO drafted their charter.³³ Their ultimate aim, it states, is “the annihilation of the Zionist entity in all of its economic, political, military, and cultural manifestations.”³⁴ Reminiscent of the Nazis, Article Four sets a racist tone, declaring that “the Palestinian identity is a genuine, essential, and inherent characteristic; it is transmitted from parents to children.” Because “the destiny of the Arab nation and, indeed, Arab existence itself depend upon the destiny of the Palestine cause” (Article Fourteen): just as the Jews threatened the existence and essence of the Aryan nation, so they threaten the existence and essence of the Arab nation. The Palestinians’ objection to Jewish settlements in the West Bank has nothing to do with “Israeli occupation” and everything to do with Jewish existence: the West Bank and the rest of “Palestine” must be made *Judenrein*.

Anything that might legitimize a Jewish presence in the Land, then, must be debunked, which is the point of Article Twenty: “Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history.” The Jews simply have *no place* in Palestine. Or better: they have no

²⁹ Karsh, *Arafat’s War*, 23.

³⁰ Karsh, *Arafat’s War*, 36.

³¹ Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 27.

³² Karsh, *Arafat’s War*, 4.

³³ See Kadi, ed., *Basic Political Documents*, 137–41.

³⁴ Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 22.

place. Period. Such is the implication of Article Twenty-Two, which asserts, “Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and geographical base for world imperialism....Israel is a constant source of threat vis-à-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world.” Yes, *the whole world*: just as the Nazis would deliver humanity from the Jewish evil, so would the PLO save humankind. In 1972 Arafat declared that in the struggle to save humanity from the Zionist menace, *every Jew* is a target.³⁵ On 22 November 1974, the UN gave Arafat their blessing by welcoming the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians (Resolution 3236) and granting the jihadist organization observer status (Resolution 3237). Following that recognition, PLO chief Salah Khalaf asserted, “An independent state on the West Bank and Gaza is the beginning of the final solution,”³⁶ obviously imitating the Nazi discourse that informed the PLO’s jihadist outlook.

In February 1979, just days after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Arafat was the first “diplomat” to be welcomed in Tehran,³⁷ where he declared to Khomeini, “The path we have chosen is identical,”³⁸ a path that has as its ultimate aim the extermination of the Jews. This embrace of the Islamic Revolution, as well as Arafat’s roots in the Muslim Brotherhood, demonstrates that the PLO is not as “secular” as most make out. In 1987 Arafat affirmed that “the religious trend is an integral part of the PLO,”³⁹ and Salah Khalaf averred, “The beginning of the Islamic awakening lay in sanctified jihad, which was started by Fatah.”⁴⁰ When Hamas was established soon after the outbreak of the First Intifada in 1987, Arafat gave its leaders his blessing: “My brother Sheik Yassin, my holy brother Hadi Hunam, I cherish your participation in the struggle for the liberation of Palestine.”⁴¹ Article Twenty-Seven of the Hamas charter affirms that the PLO “is the closest to the heart of the Islamic Resistance Movement.”⁴² Thus PLO political chief Farouq Qaddoumi declared, “We were never different from Hamas.”⁴³

One difference between the tactics employed by Hamas and the PLO, however, lies in the latter’s phased strategy, exemplified by the signing of the Oslo Accords on 13 September 1993. Just a year prior to putting his signature

³⁵ Murawiec, *The Mind of Jihad*, 34.

³⁶ Quoted in Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 47.

³⁷ Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender to Dictator*, 164.

³⁸ Murawiec, *The Mind of Jihad*, 318.

³⁹ Quoted in Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 66.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 66.

⁴¹ Quoted in Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 116.

⁴² Alexander, *Palestinian Religious Terrorism*, 64.

⁴³ Quoted in Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 120.

to the document Arafat had once again vilified the Jews – not the Israelis but the *Jews* – saying, “Damn their [the Jews’] fathers. The dogs. Filth and dirt....Treachery flows in their blood, as the Quran testifies.”⁴⁴ In order to instill Palestinian children with such rabid Jew hatred, Arafat saw to it that the agreement would allow the Palestinians to retain control over the curricula in their schools. Indeed, Efraim Karsh argues that “Arafat’s indoctrination of hatred among Palestinian children was unparalleled since Nazi Germany.”⁴⁵ Continuing to incorporate the Nazi discourse into the discourse of the PLO, Fatah leader Sakhr Habash commented on the Oslo agreement by saying that once the Palestinians had control of Gaza and the West Bank, they would proceed to the “final solution.”⁴⁶ In October 1994 Arafat appointed Ikrima Sabri Mufti of Jerusalem, who in his sermons denounced the Jews as “descendants of pigs and apes” and as conspirators in a “world Zionist conspiracy.”⁴⁷ Another imam, Ahmad Abu Halabiya, cried out on 13 October 2000: “Have no mercy on the Jews, no matter where they are, in any country”⁴⁸: the evil to be overcome is not the Jewish state but the presence of Jews and Judaism in the world.

Hamas: Heirs of the Nazis

The Islamic Resistance Movement (*Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya*), more widely known by its acronym Hamas, emerged as a militant Palestinian wing of the Muslim Brotherhood on 9 December 1987. The Movement was founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and his comrades Dr. Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi and Mahmoud al-Zahar.⁴⁹ As in the case of the Nazis, these ideologues, for whom exterminationist Jew hatred is fundamental, are not from the uneducated, disenfranchised victims of society – it is just the opposite: they come from the highest social and cultural echelons of the Arab Muslim world, as Mahmoud al-Zahar himself boasted.⁵⁰

Born in Ashkelon in 1938, Yassin grew up in awe of Haj Amin al-Husseini.⁵¹ He joined the Muslim Brotherhood in 1957 and in 1973 established

⁴⁴ Quoted in Rubin, *Revolution Until Victory?*, 180.

⁴⁵ Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 247.

⁴⁶ Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 62.

⁴⁷ See Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 103–4.

⁴⁸ Karsh, *Arafat's War*, 104–5

⁴⁹ Chehab, *Inside Hamas*, 25.

⁵⁰ See Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred*, 105.

⁵¹ Dalin and Rothman, *Icon of Evil*, 139.

the Islamic Congress in Gaza to expand the influence of the Brotherhood; in 1978 he led the foundation of the Islamic University of Gaza, whose Rector Dr. Ahmad Abu Halabiya is known for publicly calling for the massacre of Jews everywhere. As Ziad Abu-Amr has explained, Yassin and his cohorts embraced the Nazis' fundamental view that the Jews are "the dirtiest and meanest of all races," making "no distinctions between Jews, Zionists, and Israelis."⁵² Esther Webman's study of Hamas propaganda confirms Abu-Amr's findings: "The anti-Semitic rhetoric in Hamas leaflets is frequent and intense.... Generally no differentiation is made in the leaflets between Jew and Zionist, inasmuch as Judaism was perceived as embracing Zionism."⁵³ As in all ideology driven by Jew hatred, where the Jew is the enemy, Judaism is the enemy.

In 1983 Yassin set up his Islamic Congress's military wing, which he called the Palestinian Mujahadeen; inspired by the Nazi SS, it would serve as a model for the Hamas military wing formed in 1992, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam. This group of elite jihadists bears the name of the man who fought the British in Palestine and was killed in 1935. Their slogan, taken from a diatribe delivered by Iman Ibrahim Aqel, is "Killing Israelis is *ibada* [an act of devotion]."⁵⁴ The formation of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam led to Yassin's arrest by the Israelis in 1984 for the possession of arms and for operating a terrorist organization; he was released in May 1985 in one of Israel's prisoner exchanges with jihadists. He was arrested again in 1989 for kidnapping and released in another prisoner exchange in 1997. Yassin remained in power until 22 March 2004, when the Israelis eliminated him. Rantisi succeeded him, only to meet the same fate on 18 April 2004. After Rantisi came former physics teacher Khalid Mashal. Having set up his office in Damascus after Rantisi's demise, Mashal met with Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on 27 May 2008 to shore up the alliance between Hamas and Hezbollah. In 2006 Ismail Haniyeh was voted the leader of Hamas in Gaza, followed by Yahya Sinwar in 2017. Like their predecessors, Haniyeh and Sinwar applied lessons learned from the Nazis on the use of propaganda to incite what Hitler called a "wrathful hatred" of the Jews.

Nowhere is the linkage between Hitler and Hamas more evident than in the Hamas charter, through which, Matthias Küntzel argues, "Hamas follows faithfully in the footsteps of Amin el-Husseini."⁵⁵ Drafted on 18 August 1988, this document is deemed "The Charter of Allah," with the clear implication that

⁵² Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 26.

⁵³ Webman, *Anti-Semitic Motifs*, 22.

⁵⁴ Chehab, *Inside Hamas*, 50.

⁵⁵ Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred*, 111.

the word of Allah is the word of Hamas. What, then, is the word of Allah when it is appropriated by Islamic Jihadism?⁵⁶

In language reminiscent of master race discourse, the charter opens by declaring Muslims to be “the best nation that hath been raised up unto mankind,” whereas other nations are “smitten with vileness wheresoever they are found.” Quoting Hasan al-Banna, the preamble goes on to declare the exterminationist aims of Hamas: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it,” where Israel is a reference to the Jewish people, not to the Jewish state: *when al-Banna made his assertion, the Jewish state did not yet exist.*

Therefore a key to the universal rule of Islam is the universal extermination of the Jews, a position justified by Article Seven’s invocation of a teaching of the Prophet himself found in the al-Bukhari hadith, no. 3,593: “The Prophet, Allah bless him and grant him salvation, has said: ‘The Day of Judgment will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say, ‘O Moslems, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.’’’ Nature itself rebels against the existence of the Jews: natural law, therefore, requires the eradication of the Jews, so that the Jew is not just an ontological enemy but a metaphysical threat.

Reading Article Eleven, one realizes that Hamas can allow no compromise on the status of Palestine, for the presence of the Jews is not only unnatural – it is unholy: “Palestine is an Islamic Waqf land consecrated for Moslem generations until Judgment Day.” As an “Islamic Waqf land,” Palestine is consecrated ground reserved for Muslims alone. The issue of Palestine, then, is not about politics or economics – it is about holiness and truth, something that no government or ruler can negotiate. To ask a Muslim to negotiate peace with the Jews is to ask him to renounce Islam. Therefore “initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement. Abusing any part of Palestine is abuse directed against part of religion” (Article Thirteen).

Affirming the lesson that al-Banna learned from the Nazis about the importance of propaganda, Article Fifteen states, “It is necessary that scientists, educators and teachers, information and media people, as well as the educated masses, especially the youth and sheikhs of the Islamic movements, should take part in the operation of awakening.” Awakening to what? To a “wrathful hatred” of the Jews. Thus Article Fifteen ends with the refrain from the al-

⁵⁶ See Kapustyan and Nelson, *The Soul of Terror*, 122–51.

Bukhari hadith: “I will assault and kill, assault and kill, assault and kill”⁵⁷ – assault and kill the Jews. Just as the Nazis carefully shaped the minds of the young, so Article Sixteen underscores the importance of “forming the thoughts and faith of the Moslem student”; just as the Nazis used a thorough knowledge of the Jews in their assault on the soul of Israel, so Article Sixteen calls for “a comprehensive study of the enemy [the Jew].” Because jihad is not just a tactical war but a holy war, this call to know the Jew is for the purpose not only of winning battles against the body of Israel but, above all, of destroying the teaching, tradition, and testimony that the Jews represent by their very presence in the world.

Reading further in the “Charter of Allah,” one sees that the jihadists have taken Hitler’s assertion in *Mein Kampf* to heart: “Only the greatness of the sacrifices,” said the Führer, “will win new fighters for the cause.”⁵⁸ To be sure, understanding their struggle as a holy war, they take this idea to a level that even the Nazis failed to attain. What sacrifice is greater than child sacrifice, made at the hands of the mothers who brought them into the world? If the Nazis captured the souls of their children, the jihadists destroy them by training them not just for sacrifice but for murder. For the duty of a good Muslim mother toward her children is “to teach them to perform the religious duties in preparation for the role of fighting awaiting them” (Article Eighteen). So the role of the child raised by his mother and extolled by his family is to offer up his life for the sake of murdering Jews, who pose the ultimate evil facing both heaven and earth, *and not just “Palestine.”* Like the ancient idolaters against whom God warned the Israelites (Deuteronomy 18:10), they pass their children through fire by making them into sacrificial offerings consumed by the flames of their bombs.

Echoing Hitler’s insistence that the Jew is an “invisible wirepuller” who secretly conspires to rule the world,⁵⁹ Article Twenty-Two states:

[The Jews] took control of the world media, news agencies, the press, publishing houses, broadcasting stations, and others....They were behind the French Revolution, the Communist revolution and most of the revolutions we heard and hear about, here and there. With their money they formed secret societies, such as Freemasons, Rotary Clubs, the Lions and others in different parts of the world for the purpose of sabotaging societies and achieving Zionist interests. With their money they were able to control

⁵⁷ See Alexander, *Palestinian Religious Terrorism*, 57.

⁵⁸ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 103.

⁵⁹ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 493.

imperialistic countries and instigate them to colonize many countries in order to enable them to exploit their resources and spread corruption there....They were behind World War I, when they were able to destroy the Islamic Caliphate....They obtained the Balfour Declaration, formed the League of Nations through which they could rule the world. They were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains by trading in armaments, and paved the way for the establishment of their state....There is no war going on anywhere, without having their finger in it.

In a word, the Jew is the hidden source of every evil, and Hamas is the salvation of humanity from the Zionist invasion not of Palestine but of the world. Article Twenty-Eight is worth quoting in this connection:

The Zionist invasion [of the world] is a vicious invasion. It does not refrain from resorting to all methods, using *all evil* and contemptible ways to achieve its end....They aim at undermining societies, *destroying values*, corrupting consciences, *deteriorating character* and annihilating Islam. It is behind the drug trade and alcoholism in all its kinds so as to facilitate its control and expansion....*Israel, Judaism and Jews* challenge Islam and the Moslem people. (emphasis added)

Here too we see the metaphysical dimensions of Hamas's assault on the Jews and Judaism, both of which they associate with evil *as such*: hence, in keeping with National Socialist ideology, the Jews, unlike the rest of humanity, *cannot be rehabilitated*; they fall outside the circle of redemption.

In Article Thirty-Two of the Charter of Allah we have yet another borrowing from National Socialism and modern Jew hatred: "After Palestine, the Zionists aspire to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates. When they will have digested the region they overtook, they will aspire to further expansion, and so on. Their plan is embodied in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*....Leaving the circle of struggle with Zionism is high treason, and cursed be he who does that" – "high treason" meaning a betrayal of Allah, since Islamic Jihadism fuses the religious, nationalist, and political realms into one. Continuing this theme of the betrayal of Allah, Article Thirty-Four invokes the words of Allah: "Say unto those who believe not, Ye shall be overcome, and thrown together into hell" (Quran 3:12), adding, "This is the only way to liberate Palestine." Indeed, according to Hamas, casting the Jews into hell is the only way to liberate humanity from hell.

Closing Thoughts

Casting the Jew in the metaphysical category of an invisible evil, both Hitler and Hamas render the Jew as invisible as Satan. Rendering the Jew invisible, they transform the Jew into a ubiquitous threat, and the effort to eradicate the evil must be equally ubiquitous. Given the invisibility of the evil, one cannot be certain of its defeat until one has become the ruler of all humanity, which is the stated aim of the Islamic jihadists.⁶⁰ Transcending political contingencies or issues of racism, scapegoating, or xenophobia, the jihadist war against the Jews is a metaphysical war, as evidenced by a speech given on 17 January 2009 on Egypt's Al-Rahma television by Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Yaqoub:

If the Jews left Palestine to us, would we start loving them? ... The Jews are infidels – not because I say so, ... but because ... Allah who said that they are infidels....They are enemies not because they occupied Palestine. They would have been enemies even if they did not occupy a thing....Our fighting with the Jews is eternal ... , until not a single Jew remains on the face of the Earth.⁶¹

This in the name of God. Yes: the Jews *must* be exterminated *in the name of God*. In this non-negotiable absolute we find the tie that binds Hitler to Hamas.

Robert Wistrich sums up the point very well:

Their Bible may be the *Quran* and not *Mein Kampf*, but the mental structures and world view behind their actions have striking analogies with German National Socialism. The Muslim fundamentalists – like the Nazis before and during the *Shoah* – rant against the ‘anonymous powers’ of globalization and the plutocratic West....Like their totalitarian predecessors, they (falsely) claim to speak for frustrated, underprivileged, and impoverished masses betrayed by more traditional Arab and Muslim ruling elites....Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories lie at the very heart of the Muslim fundamentalist and Arab nationalist world view today – linking together plutocratic finance, international freemasonry, secularism, Zionism, and communism as dark occult forces led by the giant octopus of

⁶⁰ See Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, trans. John B. Hardie (New York: Octagon Books 1963), 167–68.

⁶¹ Yaqoub, “We Will Fight, Defeat, and Annihilate Them.”

international Jewry....This mythical structure of thought is in many ways virtually identical with Nazi anti-Semitism.....⁶²

If the jihadist Bible is the Quran, and not *Mein Kampf*, then the jihadist evil transcends the Nazi evil, inasmuch as the Quran is *Scripture*, a revelation from God, and not just the pronouncements of the Führer, no matter how godlike he may be. *Usurping* God, the Nazis usurped the absolute obligation imposed from beyond, so that the will and imagination from *within* posed the only limits to their actions. Hence the Nazis did not do what was unimaginable – they did everything imaginable. *Appropriating* God, the jihadists appropriate the authority to impose from beyond what they have determined to be the will of Allah, which is not a matter of human will but an absolute obligation. There we have the nuanced difference between how this evil defined the Holocaust then and how it seeks to bring about another Holocaust now. There is, indeed, a crucial line of influence and inspiration to be traced from Hitler to Hamas. But in tracing the determination, we also note a difference.

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⁶² Wistrich, “Islamic Judeophobia: An Existential Threat,” in Bukay, ed., *Muhammad's Monsters*, 196.

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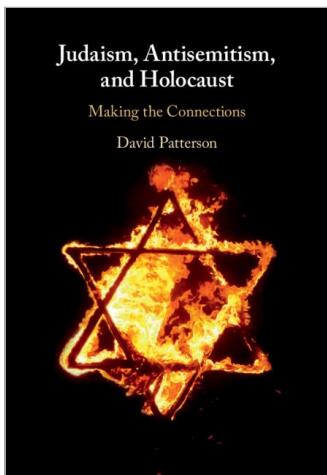
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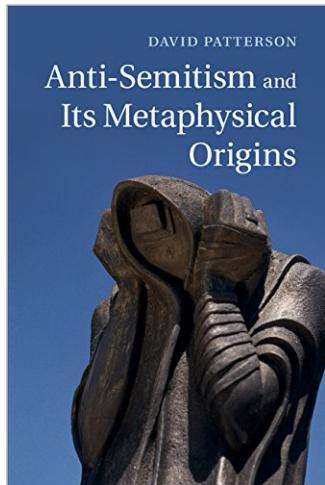
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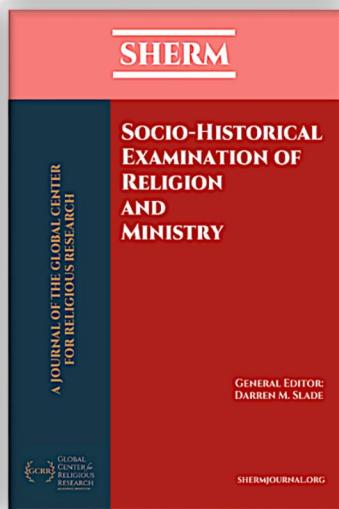
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- Feelings of unworthiness, being unlovable, or being bad in some way.
- Fear of rejection by God or the faith community.
- An engrained belief that one's life is for God's sole purpose, leading to challenges in making decisions, creating personal boundaries, and providing intentional consent.
- An inability to trust themselves, their body, or their emotions.
- Growing up with chronic fear or anxiety around salvation, rapture, Hell, Satan, or demons.
- Superstitious beliefs about what will lead to positive and negative outcomes in life.
- Perfectionism or hypervigilance.
- Extreme dualistic thinking that judges every individual thought and action as "good" or "bad."
- Denying the presence and validity of mental health issues due to a belief that those feelings come from Satan or a lack of faith and if they pray enough or are favored then God will heal them.
- Difficulty with experiencing pleasure.
- Feeling bad or wrong for having sexual thoughts or feelings, or having physical reactions to sexual situations such as crying or feeling a disconnection from the body.
- Denying sexual orientation or identity.



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